

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 AID-05

EB-07 IO-10 /078 W

----- 097632

R 171720Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4866

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RABAT 1346

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MO AG MR TS

SUBJ: CHATTI AND OULD DADDAH IN MOROCCO

REF: ALGIERS 695

1. TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HABIB CHATTI ARRIVED IN RABAT FROM ALGIERS MARCH 12 WITH MESSAGE TO KING HASSAN FROM BOURGUIBA. CHATTI, AMBASSADOR HERE FOR SIX YEARS BEFORE BECOMING FON MIN, VERY CORDIALLY RECEIVED BY KING AND BY FON MIN LARAKI. HE ALSO TOUCHED BASE WITH OLD FRIEND AND ISTIQLAL PARTY LEADER M'HAMED BOUCETTA, WITH WHOM TUNISIAN DESTOURIAN PARTY MAINTAINS COVOSE TIES. CHATTI LEFT MARCH 15.

2. RETURNING TO NOUAKCHOTT FROM ALGIERS, MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH MADE HABITUAL SHORT REFUELING STOP MARCH 14 IN AGADIR, WHERE MET BY DELEGATION OF NOTABLES. IN WARM STATEMENT, OULD DADDAH THANKED KING FOR EXCELLENT RECEPTION AND EXPRESSED BEST WISHES FOR MOROCCAN PEOPLE.

3. IN INTERVIEW WITH SEMI-OFFICIAL LE MATIN REPORTER DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MARCH 11 FLIGHT FROM TUNIS TO ALGIERS, CHATTI SAID GOM-GOT

RELATIONS EXCELLENT POLITICALLY BUT, AS IN PAST, WORK NEEDED IN ECONOMIC AREAS. CHATTI ALSO TOLD MOROCCAN PRESS MARCH 13 THAT BOURGUIBA MESSAGE TO KING HASSAN DEALT WITH MAJOR WORLD ISSUES, PARTICULARLY MIDDLE EAST AND "ENERGY PROBLEM, PREPARATORY CONFERENCE OF WHICH WILL BE HELD SOON." WE HEAR FROM KNOWLEDGEABLE ALGERIAN SOURCE THAT BOURGUIBA UNSATISFIED WITH CHOICE OF THIRD WORLD NON-OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN PARIS OPEC CONFERENCE. ATTITUDE DESCRIBED AS "WHY ZAIRE AND NOT TUNISIA?" WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION, BUT PRESUME CHATTI MAY HAVE LOBBIED ON THIS ISSUE HERE.

4. IN REMARKS TO PRESS, CHATTI PLACED VISIT TO ALGERIA IN CONTEXT OF NORMAL MAGHREB CONSULTATIONS. HE SAW BILATERAL RELATIONS OF ALL THREE COUNTRIES STRENGTHENING SLOWLY BUT SURELY, THOUGH LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD GRAND MAGHREB DEPLORABLE ("OUR ACTIVITY IS, WHY NOT SAY IT, ZERO."). SAHARA AND ENCLAVES ISSUES ALSO MENTIONED PUBLICLY IN MARCH 11 INTERVIEW AND IN DEPARTURE STATEMENT. CHATTI WAS CAREFUL, HOWEVER, TO MAINTAIN DISTINCTION BETWEEN TWO PROBLEMS, FULLY ENDORSING GOM'S POSITION ON RECOVERY OF ENCLAVES BUT REMAINING CIRCUMSPECT ON SAHARA BY NOTING PAST SUPPORT FOR MOROCCAN RECOURSE TO ICJ.

5. OUR ALGERIAN SOURCE REFUSED COMMENT ON OULD DADDAH'S TRIP TO ALGIERS, BUT SAID WITH SOME APPARENT IRRITATION THAT RECENT MOROCCAN EFFORTS AT PURCHASING MAURITANIAN SUPPORT, EVEN IF HEAVY HANDED, APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE. SOURCE NOTED THAT ALGERIAN ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA HAD BEEN BEGUN IN 1966 AND HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN AT REAL COST TO ALGERIA'S OWN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. MOROCCO, BY CONTRAST, WAS JOHNNY COME LATELY.

6. COMMENT: AS IN HIS EARLIER STOP IN ALGIERS, CHATTI SEEMS TO HAVE COVERED WATERFRONT DURING VISIT HERE. OULD DADDAH'S APPARENTLY SUDDEN VISIT TO ALGIERS MAY HAVE RESULTED FROM HEIGHTENED MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN RIVALRY OVER MAURITANIA, AND IT IS POSSIBLE CHATTI MAY HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING ROLE OF MEDIATOR. FOREGOING HOWEVER, IS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE AS INTERESTED DIPLOMATS HAVE SHOWN LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR DISCUSSING MATTER.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RABAT01346
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750093-1119
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750344/aaaabnia.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ALGIERS 695
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHATTI AND OULD DADDAH IN MOROCCO
TAGS: PFOR, MO, AG, MR, TS, (CHATTI, HABIB), (DADDAH, OULD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006